

Message Text

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17

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

/062 W

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R 050958Z JUNE 75

FM AMEMBASSY MASERU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4912

INFO AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL DURBAN

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, LT

SUBJECT: TREASON TRIAL II

REF: MASERU 409

1. DEFENSE COMPLETED CONCLUDING ARGUMENTS IN SECOND TREASON TRIAL
MAY 30, VERDICT SCHEDULED FOR JULY 8.

2. BF 30 PRISONERS ON TRIAL AFTER OPENING APRIL 4 (REFTEL), 8
SUBSEQUENTLY DISCHARGED ON DEFENSE MOTION, LEAVING 22 DEFENDENTS.

3. DEFENSE CBUNSELS INFORM US PROSECUTIOF HAS HAD SOME DIFFICULTY
PRESENTING EVIDENCE. THOSE AGAINST WHOM BEST CASE COULD BE MADE
WERE DEALT WITH IN FIRST TREASON TRIAL. IN SECOND TRIAL PROSECUTION
ALSO HAD PROBLEMS WITH ITS WITNESSES, INCLUDING SOME WHO WERE HELP-
FUL TO GOVERNMENT CASE IN FIRST TRIAL. SEVERAL WITNESSES ADMITTED
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DURESS, CHANGED THEIR STORIES OR REFUSED TO TESTIFY.

4. IN RELATED EPISODE, THERE WAS BRIEF CLASH IN MID-MAY BETWEEN HIGH COURT AND GOL OVER CASE OF TWO POLICEMEN ALLEGEDLY INVOLVED IN COUP ATTEMPT BUT WHO AMONG 18 SECOND TREASON TRIAL DEFENDENTS DISCHARGED APRIL 4. THESE TWO RE-ARRESTED AND WERE TO STAND TRIAL BEFORE SPECIAL POLICE TRIBUNAL. TREASON TRIAL DEFENSE FILED MOTION IN HIGH COURT FOR THEIR RELEASE AND CHIEF JUSTICE MAPETLA, GRANTING INTERIM INTERDICTION AGAINST THEIR STANDING TRIAL, DELIVERED VEHEMENT BLAST AGAINST LEGALITY OF TRIBUNAL AND LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING IT. MAPETLA WAS ILL AND ON LEAVE WHEN GOVERNMENT CAME BACK TO HIGH COURT WITH NEW REGULATIONS TO HELP MEET SHORT-

COMINGS BUT A TING PUISNE JUDGE ISAACS NEVERTHELESS ORDERED IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF TWO POLICEMEN. GOVERNMENT IGNORED THE ORDER AND LOCKED UP TWO MEN AGAIN. JUDGE ISAACS REISSUED HIS RELEASE ORDER AND THE GOVERNMENT THEN COMPLIED.
HAUGHT

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COURT PROCEEDINGS, TREASON, TRIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MASERU00570
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750196-0844
From: MASERU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750694/aaaaguof.tel
Line Count: 83
Locator: TEXT ON MICROFILM, TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 MASERU 409
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 AUG 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <09 DEC 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> wfs 971015
Subject: TREASON TRIAL II
TAGS: PINT, LT
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006